



TEXAS POND HONKER

September 2025

Character, Charity, Fellowship

Blue Goose – Texas Pond

Monday, September 8, 2025 @ 5:30 PM

Mesero - Prestonwood

5505 Belt Line Rd. Dallas, TX 75254

Charity

At our September meeting we have invited two different nonprofit organizations to come and speak. Our meeting will start promptly at 6:15 with each entity speaking for 10-15 minutes.

Unspoken Motherhood

Unspoken Motherhood Inc comes alongside mothers when they first receive the news their baby is miscarried, stillborn, or receives a life limiting diagnosis and dies shortly after birth. They partner with doctors, birthing centers, and hospitals to help bridge the gap between medical providers and unspoken mothers, so both get the support they need in the first moments of grief and trauma.

Nurse Advocates from Unspoken Motherhood are both nurses and loss moms, and they connect each mother they advocate for with valuable resources to help make the journey post-hospital or doctor's office more survivable and a little less alone, and gift each mother with a gift basket (around \$150 value) with tangible gifts that include: jewelry, restaurant gift card, tea towel, pre-packaged snacks, figurine, mug, bookmarks, specially handmade soap, and sanitary napkin pads.

Doctor's offices are provided with miscarriage boxes (around \$50 value) to hand out to mothers when they first find out their baby is miscarried.

Each time a Nurse Advocate is called to advocate for a new loss mom, they bring food to the medical staff, as a tangible

way to support, acknowledging that loss also takes a toll on the staff.

Based on yearly income of \$12,000: approximately 82% goes to recipients, 18% goes to overhead. The overhead is fixed and minimal, and there are times when specific donors donate to cover overhead costs, in which case a larger portion goes to recipients.

Special Olympics

In 1981-1982 at the Southern Region Convention hosted by Alabama Special Olympics was introduced along with the Education Committee for consideration of awards in the following Blue Goose year. To get things moving forward Grand Nest was to meet with the Special Olympics, Inc. in Denver to outline a plan of action. At the 1982-1983 convention it was voted on and passed to make Special Olympics the charity of choice for Blue Goose. All the Ponds were encouraged to get involved with Special Olympics in their respective areas.

In 1983-1984 MLGG Rice provided this in his report of his year in office: "Rice next touched on the first year of the Grand Nest's new relationship with Special Olympics, Inc. In February 1984, he worked as a "Hugger" at the Special Winter Olympics in Colorado's Arapahoe Ski Basin. He spoke eloquently as he described the 350 participants, "it brings tears to your eyes when we see how hard those kids try and try to do things we take for granted every day. They have more guts than I do in just getting on the skis." He said that some of the Ponds are already contributing to Special Olympics, and he urged all Ganders to contact Special Olympics and ask how they can help.

Thorough the historical archives, I also note MLGG Gordon Crutcher (I refer to him as the Godfather of Charity) said in his acceptance speech at the 1987 convention in Orlando, Florida....."Nothing would make me prouder than for you to take every opportunity to enlighten your fellow Ganders and business associates about the other side of Blue Goose, to give them an insight into those little-known but

significant activities which have added substance and value to our Order over the past 81 years. Tell the industry how we support Special Olympics – not just with dollars but with vital manpower as well. Tell them that Grand Nest has allocated almost 10% of its dues to charitable and educational activities. Tell how Grand Nest and its Ponds encourage continuing insurance education with donations to various insurance institutions in Canada and the United States....."

When both entities have spoken the Texas Pond will present each with a donation of \$1500, which if they choose can notify the North Texas Giving Day Program of this donation.

North Texas Giving Day is Communities Foundation of Texas's largest community event and the largest regional giving initiative in the Nation.

North Texas Giving Day 2025 will take place on Thursday, September 18

North Texas Gives, powered by Communities Foundation of Texas, expands on the foundation's largest annual community event, North Texas Giving Day, to support local nonprofits and grow community giving year-round. Through NorthTexasGives.org, **100% of all donations** go to nonprofits in more than 25 cause areas across 20 North Texas counties every day of the year.



**The Big Proud Gander
Mitch Williams
Most Loyal Gander**

Well, there is a change in the air. Temps are starting to drop as we move into Fall and that most glorious time of year: FOOTBALL SEASON 😊. I'm looking forward to several big college games this weekend. And while I'm not sure looking forward to it is the right term, I'll definitely be watching the Cowboys – Eagles game on September 4th. Maybe, finally this is the Cowboys year, probably not but hope springs eternal in early September!

I hope you'll join us for our monthly meeting at Mesero's Addison on September 8th. We are hosting two charities, Special Olympics and Unspoken Motherhood, who will give presentations explaining their missions and how they impact the DFW area. Afterwards, they will receive donations from the Blue Goose charity fund which should be matched by North Texas Giving Day. We had a similar program last Fall, and it was truly one of the most

meaningful Blue Goose meetings I've ever attended. It is an honor to be associated with such awesome organizations.

Look forward to seeing you there!

LAST MONTH



From the July & August meetings the Texas Pond gathered a total of \$1,365.44 in school supplies for the kids of Community Partners of Dallas.

Save the Date!



Celebrating a New Year!

Can you believe it we have only four months left in 2025 – then it is Christmas time and time to celebrate a new year!

Mark your calendars now for the Texas Pond's New Year kick-off on January 12th, 2026.

The event will be at Mesero- Preston Hollow location. Stay tuned for further details.

State tuned for some special announcements for this event.



Taking a moment to reflect back on time!

At the 119th Convention our Grand Nest Historian, Dan Rich, asked everyone to reflect on their Blue Goose initiation and share their thoughts and impressions.

From the Texas Pond, three Ganders submitted their thoughts and memories.

Linda Meik

1994 was a year that brought us a variety of memories from movies like Forrest Gump, The Mask, Legends of the Fall, The Shawshank Redemption, and Pulp Fiction to music "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" by Elton John; and "I'd Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That)?" by Meat Loaf; and the sitcom Friends premiered on NBC.

The political arena also changed Bill Clinton (Democrat) was the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Canada was Jean Chrétien (Liberal Party), and in the UK the Prime Minister was Sir John Major (Conservative). Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed the Kremlin Accords on January 14th, de-escalating the tension inherited from the Cold War.

The year was marked by the Rwandan genocide, but on a more positive note, South Africa's first multiracial elections saw Nelson Mandela elected president on April 27th.

Here in the Dallas/Fort Worth area of Texas we were watching the merger of multiple insurance related **companies**. Employment had multiple challenges, so around August/ September 1994, several other insurance professionals started meeting to "network" and to just get to know other insurance professionals. It was felt that the more agents, brokers, risk managers, or adjusters that we knew, the more opportunities we all would have in the future. Bill Henry organized this gathering of insurance professionals.

As we all gathered at a Happy Hour and were discussing the industry, Bill Henry shared with us that he had done some research and came across an organization that he thought fit our networking group's objectives and the community we live in. That organization was the

Honorable Order of Blue Goose International. As it turned out we had a couple of gentlemen in the gathering who were both familiar with the organization and enthusiastic about moving forward.

We all began to pull a list of like-minded folks together, then in February 1995, Chris Reith, MLGG came to Dallas/Fort Worth and initiated 75 of us Goslings. Following this initiation, at the 1995-1996 convention in Westchester, the Texas Pond received its third Charter.

Our Grand Historian has asked us to tell how we felt being initiated when we first joined Blue Goose, well, I felt honored and privileged to be part of a group of professional insurance folks. The words in The Charge left a strong impression on me and made me almost bust with pride for my industry.

Because of the times that were difficult all of us at the initiation felt we needed to strictly adhere to the C& BLs and maintain a high-level professionalism always. At that time, the Texas Pond would only let high-level insurance management folks into the membership. This group took very seriously the obligations and the honor of the organization.

I think what Bill Henry wrote in our March 1995 newsletter sums up how he also felt about The Honorable Order of Blue Goose. ***"Blue Goose International is a social insurance fraternal organization built on sentiment, loyalty, and friends. It is a vehicle to aid us in developing Character, Charity and Fellowship with others who share a place in our industry. Surely, we will have fun, but this is coincidental to knowing and being known by insurance people. It provides an opportunity to meet those in the same field who may be competitors, insurance buyers, insurance brokers, adjusters, and many others as shown in the Membership Eligibility Rules. Blue Goose provides a wonderful opportunity for us to improve the image of ourselves and our industry in the eyes of the general public. We have so very much more in common with one another than we do conflict."***

Another tidbit for you at the beginnings in Texas is that the following year, Terry Maloney came to Texas, and we initiated 125 Goslings in Houston.

Wayne Ottaway (Blue Goose member since 1989.

1989: World Wide Web established. Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Disaster, First GPS Satellite Launched, Fall of the Berlin Wall and Wayne Ottaway was initiated into Blue Goose.

This small-town Wisconsin boy found himself in the City of Chicago doing risk control work for a property insurance

company, Industrial Risk Insurers (IRI). I did this from 1980 to 1985 when I had a chance to apply for an underwriting position within IRI in the Milwaukee, WI Office.

That is when I started to hear about this group, Honorable Order of the Blue Goose International. I did not understand the somewhat secretive aspect to this group, so I asked my boss at the time about it. I knew he was a member. He described the Blue Goose and what it is about and afterward, I asked how to join. He said he would let me know when I was ready to apply. This made me want to join even more.

In other words, he had questions about me making it in my job, this country boy engineer trying to do underwriting and business deals. He also needed time to assess my character. It took 4 years for him to feel comfortable vouching for me as a member. I was kind of ticked about this, but I was finally getting the chance to be a member of the Wisconsin Home Nest. Initiations were only conducted once a year, I so best not miss it.

I remember the formality along with the pomp and circumstance that surrounded my initiation. I specifically remember the white and black balls. If the members thought you were of good enough character to become a member, then they selected a white ball and put it in a box which you could not see. If they had doubts, a black ball was selected and put in the box. At the end, the box was opened and hopefully all white balls were in the box. It only took one black ball, and you were out. I had heard stories (rumors) of others being "blackballed" and not approved as members. Thus, there was some nervousness with this procedure. The whole thing was anonymous so you could not even know who blackballed you.

After joining I really looked forward to meetings to see others in the local industry. We would have a January meeting and dinner at a fine restaurant in Milwaukee. It had always seemed it was subject to winter weather. I remember being there and watching it snow thinking "I hope I can make it home." If you missed, you had to wait until summer for the golf outing to see your fellow Ganders. Fast forward, a few years, and my company decided they would only entertain large accounts and therefore no longer need offices in the smaller markets (in retrospect a very bad decision).

Thus, this cheesehead headed south to Dallas TX to manage the IRI Office there. One thing I noticed after I got to Dallas is that there are a lot of gentlemen that are named Bill Henry. Or Billy Henry or Billy Bob Henry or Billy Dee Henry and so on. Shortly after I got there, I got a call

from Billy Henry asking if I knew anything about an organization called Blue Goose. I said yes, I did. He then asked me if I would help re-establish the Texas Pond as they no longer had a charter in Dallas. Again, I said yes and off to the races we go. Our introductory meetings were held at the LaCima Club in LasColinas. There was a very strong interest, so we went forward with re-chartering effort.

The Texas Pond had a very different vibe to it than the Wisconsin Home Nest, but it was a great group of insurance people and gave me a way to meet many folks in the industry quickly. I also got to meet one fine lady named Linda Meik who really helped guide the organization thru some rough patches and is still today a solid rock of the Texas Pond.

Fun fact #1: I was born a few miles from Green Lake, WI where the Blue Goose was started.

Fun fact #2: I was asked by my future boss in the interview process why I wanted the underwriting job, and I told him so I could get his job. (District Manager). Shortly after my initiation into Blue Goose, there was a management shake-up, and I did get his job.

JoAnn Clark

At the 1988-1989 Honorable Order of Blue Goose, International Convention at the Hotel Queen Mary, Long Beach, California a proposed amendment to strike the word "male" from the Constitution & By-Laws was passed 74 to 34. Similar votes had failed in the previous two years.

The Queen Mary vote allowed women to become members of the Blue Goose. In June 1994, five years later, I was initiated into the Seattle Pond. What I remember about that initiation ceremony is one male member got up and was saying Blue Goose was ruined. I was one of 5 women who were initiated.

This gentleman "actually" cried causing extreme worry among the "real men" present. It turned out that this crying guy was only a golf-playing member who never participated in Blue Goose. We never saw him again. (I cannot remember his name.)





MORE HONORABLE ORDER OF BLUE GOOSE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION NEWS



July 12-16, 2026
The Galt House, Louisville, KY



TRIPLE CROWN CLUB MEMBERS;

Dustin & Kim Bales
Steve Carson
Dan & Sue Rich
Ashley Hanson
Wendy & Michael Hubbard
Tom Elder
Keith Strohecker
Mary Kay Marchetti
Linda Meik
Randy Wilson
Bill Gruhler
Edward Phinney
Tony & Mary Thibaudeau



Commemorative 2026 Convention Pin

This pin comes in 4 pieces. One can buy each piece separately or the entire pin for \$300. Once you have all four pieces you are automatically put in the Triple Crown Club.

One can pay by check, in US funds, Money Order to Southern Region Convention Fund, or by Venmo or PayPal - scan the QR code for payment and email the enclosed form to Kristi Brown at:

kristi.brown@us.davies-group.com



Kristi Brown
@Blue-Goose-123



venmo number 4015

TEXAS POND CALENDAR



OCTOBER MEETING – TEXAS POND

5:30 PM GANDERS & GOSLINGS & GUESTS
SECOND MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2025
MEETING: MESERO- PRESTONWOOD

NOVEMBER MEETING – TEXAS POND

5:30 PM GANDERS & GOSLINGS & GUESTS
SECOND MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2025
MEETING: MESERO- PRESTONWOOD

DECEMBER MEETING – TEXAS POND

5:30 PM GANDERS & GOSLINGS & GUESTS
SECOND MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025
MEETING: MESERO- PRESTONWOOD



MLGG & SOF



GOP & COP



WGQ & KGGE

Here are the 2025-2026 Texas Pond Officers

Most Loyal Gander – Mitch Williams (M) 214-213-5751
williams.mitch@yahoo.com

Supervisor of the Flock – Randy Webb (M) 214-801-9197
rw0007@yahoo.com

Custodian of the Goslings – Matt Arnold (M) 210-473-7443
Matthew.Arnold@Sedgwick.com

Guardian of the Pond – Valerie Wilson (M) 870-213-8192
val_michelle04@hotmail.com

Keeper of the Golden Goose Egg - Ashley Hansen (M)
214-212-8547 ashansen@aol.com

Wielder of the Goose Quill - Linda Meik
(M) 682-715-5341 lindameik9@gmail.com